Education Council of the Nebraska Information Technology Commission
Recommendation for Action Items, 2001-2002

EC Priorities
The sector priorities of the Education Council of the Nebraska Information Technology
Commission are to provide recommendations that support:

PRIORITY EC-1: Providing an infrastructure that will permit all citizens of Nebraska to have
access to the same educational experiences, regardless of location.

EC 1.1
TITLE: **Statewide Video Standard**
DESCRIPTION: The Education Council will assist in developing and implementing the
statewide video standard for distance learning including a migration path and cost analysis.
A coordinated, planned deployment of technology investment across the State's distance
learning systems is needed to address interactive distance learning and new technology
solutions.
LEAD: Operations Work Group or Appointed Task Group
TIMEFRAME: 4th Quarter, 2001-3rd Quarter, 2002
UPDATE: The Education Council has named four members to the Technical Panel's
Video Standards Work Group. As soon as the video standard and migration plan is approved
by the NITC, a report will be developed detailing the costs, benefits, and impediments to
developing a single, statewide distance learning system.

EC 1.2
TITLE: **Adequate Rural Bandwidth**
DESCRIPTION: The Education Council will support strategies that ensure that adequate
bandwidth is being provided to the rural areas of the State so as to provide access to the same
educational experiences, regardless of location. The Education Council will emphasize the needs
of the rural areas, including IP-centric applications, during NETCOM transport deployment and
investigate application development that supports synchronous, asynchronous distance education
as well as voice/video/data transfer.
LEAD: Policies, Procedures, Planning Subcommittee or Appointed Task Group
TIMEFRAME: 4th Quarter, 2001-2nd Quarter, 2002
UPDATE: As the NETCOM Contract nears implementation; the Staff of the NITC and the
Task Group will investigate the cost, benefits and impediments to deploying Internet 2 for
K-12 districts and remaining higher education institutions in Nebraska.

PRIORITY EC-3: Ensuring life cycle funding;

EC 3.1

TITLE: **Statewide educational technology appropriation**

DESCRIPTION: The Education Council will pursue a statewide appropriation for building future educational potential and subsidizing core infrastructure needs. As K-12 and Higher Education have continued to invest in educational telecommunications for basic systems processes and educational outreach, technology costs have continued to grow. The amount of funding needed exceeds the amount that can be reallocated through existing appropriations. As institutions reach the saturation point for administrative and student computing, lease-purchase options would help stabilize funding needs.

LEAD: Policies, Procedures, Planning Subcommittee or Appointed Task Group

TIMEFRAME: 4th Quarter, 2001--1st Quarter, 2002

UPDATE: The Midwest Higher Education Consortium, in cooperation with the Education Council, has negotiated and advertised a bulk computer purchasing agreement with at least three primary vendors. The discounts are available to higher education institutions, K-12 districts, state government, students, and staff. Assistance is needed to advertise the agreement to all affected entities as well as explore innovative approaches to long-term information technology funding.

PRIORITY EC-4: Addressing the needs of the learner;

EC 4.1

TITLE: **Role of Technology in Standards**

DESCRIPTION: The Education Council will recommend the appropriate role for technology in statewide academic standards and/or proficiencies and the part it plays in certification/re-certification. Twenty-six of 50 states are reported to have certification and/or re-certification requirements in instructional technology. Nebraska has chosen to recognize technology skills for teachers as proficiencies and are not required for certification or for most appraisals making skill development quite voluntary and unmeasured.

LEAD: Training Advisory Work Group or Appointed Task Group

TIMEFRAME: 3rd Quarter, 2001 – ongoing

UPDATE: Task Group will be assigned in September, 2001 and will begin background research on information technology requirements in teacher certification and appraisal.

PRIORITY EC-6: Pursuing leading edge technology applications.

EC 6.1

TITLE: **Synchronous and Asynchronous Instructional Methods**

DESCRIPTION: The Education Council will encourage the development of new instructional methods and resources for synchronous and asynchronous instruction. Both K-12 and Higher Education are going through a period of rapid development and creation of new learning opportunities using interactive and web-based courses. By encouraging funds for workshops and promoting training opportunities, the Council will enhance the quality of distance education offered in the State.

LEAD: Training Advisory Work Group or Appointed Task Group

TIMEFRAME: 3rd Quarter, 2001 – ongoing

UPDATE: The Training Advisory Work Group recommended awarding of $120,000 in Telecommunications Training Grants in April, 2001. In addition, its July retreat focused on performing an assessment of training needs within the State. Other groups such as the Nebraska Distance Learning Association and Task Force IV of the Nebraska Catalyst Grant are working on related activities.

PRIORITY EC-2: Identifying and facilitating diverse training opportunities;

No action item was identified for this priority in this performance year.

PRIORITY EC-5: Coordinating statewide education I.T. efforts and resources, including collaboration with public and private entities;

No action item was identified for this priority in this performance year.

The current slate of action items recommended by the Education Council on May 16, 2001 were approved by the NITC on June 13, 2001 as Section 5--Implementation of the Statewide Technology Plan.